

Why is there a \$3 million earmark in the bill for an organization with a stated goal of providing “an opportunity for students to experience real science; to learn that science is an ongoing process, not just memorizing facts?” I am referring, of course, to this earmark for the Lewis Center for Educational Research.

This is becoming somewhat of an annual earmark. In fact, according to the Citizens Against Government Waste database, this educational center has received earmarks in past Defense appropriation bills ranging from \$2.5 million to \$3.5 million in every fiscal year since 2003. According to the certification letter submitted by the sponsor, “the funding would be used to develop on-line educational curriculum.” The Lewis Center for Educational research is an “educational facility designed to improve educational effectiveness and scientific literacy among American schoolchildren.” According to its Web site, since opening in 1990, the Lewis Center has provided hands-on instructional programs for elementary, middle, and high school students throughout local communities and across the Nation.

I would ask the same questions here. Why are we providing an earmark that is to a school that is sponsored by groups like Target, Wal-Mart, Verizon, Boeing, State Farm Insurance, Southern California Edison, Lucent Technologies, and others?

This is to a school; this is a defense bill. I simply would ask why is it here in the defense bill? How does it serve our national defense? What essential Federal purpose does it serve? Should it receive any earmark funding at all? And certainly not, I would say, in a defense bill.

And then the notion that this is actually taken out of an account for Family Advocacy Programs in the Operations and Maintenance account. I would think that, given the needs that the families of our troops have, that that money would be better left in that account for that purpose than to go to what I think is a charter school for other purposes.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, it is most interesting that we would have this discussion this evening. It is not my intention to spend a lot of time on this, but, nonetheless, last year we had a discussion about another project entirely near the Marine base, and I asked the gentleman if he had ever been to the Marine barracks in Washington, D.C., and he had not.

In this case to even suggest that there isn't an interest in education within the families that make up our services across the country and the

world causes me almost to smile if it wasn't so painful to think that he didn't understand how important this could be to military families.

This program involves a model center, developing methods for attracting and training, developing teachers and otherwise, to encourage young people to be involved in math and science. It has now affected literally tens of thousands of students all across the country. It has had a tremendous impact upon military families who are interested in these programs. It has attracted NASA, playing a major role in the fundamental center of the success of this educational effort. Retired employees from companies like JPL volunteer time to help in this effort because it is having an effect upon science education all across America, including literally, literally, hundreds, if not thousands, of student in Arizona alone.

Last year we had this discussion. I don't want to take a lot of time, only to say that after the discussion, 50 of my colleagues decided to vote against this program and well over 300 of my friends, our colleagues, thought it was a worthwhile effort. It is indeed one of the models for attracting kids of military families dramatically to math and science across the country, and I urge a “no” vote on the gentleman's recommendation.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEWIS of California. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the gentleman. The gentleman was at the forefront of Predator and many other programs which the Defense Department didn't ask for.

And I want to say to the gentleman I had to find out that the young people in the schools where the bases are needed counseling. General Casey went out and found the same thing, and then he called me and said we need to take care of it. We already took care of it. We take care of all kinds of things like that.

The people that work in the hospitals that Bill and I visit all the time were hurting so badly, they needed help. We put extra money in for it.

And when you talk about programs that you may not think directly affects the Defense Department, breast cancer research, prostate cancer research, those diseases affect military families.

Diabetes. Not long ago, I asked the Air Force, How many do you think you have with diabetes in the Air Force? And they said 40,000. The Surgeon General went back and said 150,000. That is in all the families. We started a research program to see how we get them under control because it saves not only emotional strain and physical strain but it saves money.

So we do these kinds of things all the time, changing the direction of the Defense Department with health care things, with educational facilities that are important to the military.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEWIS of California. I would be happy to yield to my chairman.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Chairman MURTHA has just raised an issue that reminded me in talking about earmarks and good programs. One of the best programs this Congress ever created in the health field was the National Bone Marrow Donor Program, which has saved thousands of lives, a proven system. It was created by this subcommittee with an earmark many years ago, and it saved thousands of lives.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, Mr. YOUNG is exactly correct.

I don't stand to take credit for all kinds of extra earmarks. But as long as we are talking about it, the gentleman has heard the Predator mentioned a number of times. I think the gentleman knows that the bureaucrats don't necessarily have all the answers, whether those bureaucrats happen to be in the Education Department or they happen to be in the military.

Back when we were looking at the Predator, the idea of an unmanned aerial vehicle, it was pretty clear that the Air Force was much more interested in programs where planes were flown by men than in new ideas. The Predator came along, an unmanned aerial vehicle concept, and I had to take credit, my goodness, credit that year when this became implemented for some \$40 million of an earmark to advance the RDT&E, the research and development. If that \$40 million had not been appropriated, Predator would not have been available in Bosnia.

Now, since then Predator has gone forward and done many a thing, and I suppose I should be taking credit for hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of earmarks. But in the meantime, the military does not have all the answers to all the ideas, and, indeed, neither does the Department of Education.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, I would simply reiterate what we are talking about here. This is a charter school that, although it has been spoken of as serving military families, it has no more of a mission to serve military families, I would suggest, than the school that my kids go to. There are military families there. But I would not presume to give an earmark to that school simply because military families might attend that school. There is nothing in the literature that we have been able to find anywhere in this school that has any specific purpose to serve military families.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLAKE. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Upon examination of this program, the last time we discussed this a year ago and took the Members' time in a very late